WOMEN DESIGNERS OF BOOK-PLATES

WILBUR MACEY STONE

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WOMEN DESIGNERS OF BOOK-PLATES

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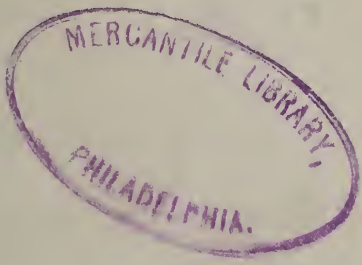
WOMEN DESIGNERS OF BOOK-PLATES

By WILBUR MACEY STONE



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To ADELAIDE HELEN PAGE
The Youngest "Woman Designer"

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This is a list of the prints to be found in this book:

FRONTISPIECE. Egerton Castle
by Mrs. Agnes Castle

Amos Bonsall
by Mary W. Bonsall

Cranston Brenton
by Mrs. Eliz. C. Brenton

Semper Bonis Artibus
by Mrs. Lina Burger

Vivien Brown
by Minna Brown

—— Mitchell
by Mrs. Beulah M. Clute

John O. Roe
by Margaret Elwood

John Jay Farnsworth
by Ethel N. Farnsworth

Margery Lattimer
by May Chatteris Fisher

William Neish
by Mrs. Georgia F. Gaskin

Louise M. Glazier
by Louise M. Glazier

Lucy H. Booth
by Mary F. Hackley

The Plastic Club
by Elisabeth M. Hallowell

Mary K. Wheatland
by Olive Lothrop Grover

Margarethe Heisser
by Margarethe Heisser

Martha Scott Anderson
by Margarethe Heisser

Irene Hardy
by Mrs. Annie B. Hooper

W 8590

John Francis Harris
by the Kalo Shop

Marjorie Curtiss
by Mabel Key

Florence Levetus
by Celia Levetus

Florence Cornelia Ellwanger
by Mrs. Mary D. Little

William Augustus Babcock
by Florence Estelle Little

Presentation Plate
by Mrs. Blanche McM. Mansfield

A. Helen Page
by Adelaide Helen Page

Henry J. Patten
by Mary L. Prindiville

Frank M. Elliot
by Christia M. Reade

Eugene Gerald Fassett
by Mary M. Reid

Walter Dana Swan
by Amy Sacker

Ernest Olmstead Saltmarsh
by Bertha E. Saltmarsh

Sarah Marguerite Scribner
by S. Marguerite Scribner

Frank Tyars
by Pamela Colman Smith

Joyce Woolmer
by Helen Stratton

Bhalu and Jackson
by Helen Stratton

Sarah Bradford Williams
by Emma J. Totten

Fairfax Henry Wheelan
by Mrs. Albertine R. Wheelan

Eunice Morgan Schenck
by Grace Wright

WOMEN DESIGNERS OF BOOK-PLATES

Ever since the birth of Art in the dim past, women have been producers of embroideries and the daintier forms of decoration, and in the world of bibliolatry some of our most cherished examples of old bindings are the embroidered covers done by dainty mediæval hands. The book-plate is essentially a bit of embroidery or decoration embodying the personality of the owner. So it seems fitting that the women should have at least some share in its production. Writers on this subject and collectors, have paid scant courtesy to woman as a designer of book-plates, although as an owner and user she has had her full share of attention.

This essay is not one of history or criticism but rather of appreciation of the work of the women of to-day in this field of design, although in the last century there were some excellent book-plates made by women. Prominent in the richer collections of the present are a couple of designs by Agnes Berry, made in 1793 for Anna Damer of England; while in France, Louise le Daulceur, Thérése Brochery, Madame Jourdan and others are

known to have signed ex libris. Germany also has a few eighteenth century designs to her credit.

The most celebrated woman of the past (and with a past) to do a book-plate is Madame Pompadour who not only designed the little label for her library at Crecy but also etched it.

Ordinary and ill-made book-plates are largely in evidence among men designers and we regret to admit that the women who have essayed in this field are also, at times, afflicted with dearth of ideas and weakness of execution, but even the least skilled seem to have had *some* happy thoughts and to have been able to express them pleasingly.

In gathering the material for this little book it has been surprising to note the large number of women who have designed book-plates; some of course in an amateurish and dilettante way but many seriously and with ability.

It is always interesting to note the extremes in our pursuits, so, starting at infancy, the credit of being the youngest "woman designer" unquestionably belongs to Miss Adelaide Page of Boston, who, at the age of four and one-half years, drew for herself a book-plate that is refreshingly delightful. After importuning her mother, who is also a designer, for a book-plate, until her

patience was exhausted, Miss Helen took up the pencil on her own account. The result was reproduced in exact fac-simile and prints of it are to be found among the treasures of many large collections. Miss Marguerite Elwood, daughter of an ardent collector of Rochester is perhaps second in point of youth. At the age of twelve she made for herself a plate, punning both her names. This design is well-drawn and is in every way creditable. Miss Elwood has since devoted serious study to drawing and there are now some half-dozen book-plates bearing her signature.

Very few women have used the engraver's burin or the etcher's needle; they have usually been content to stop with the making of the design. There are, however, a few who have carried their work through to the printing plate. Mrs. Benthall and Miss Helard in England and Miss Little in this country are the only ones in this class that it has been my fortune to find. Mrs. Benthall etches her designs, which are usually pictorial. Several of these are for children. Miss Helard's are nearly all armorial designs, engraved on copper or steel, and are rich in conception and skillfully executed. Miss Little, of Cleveland, has made about a dozen designs some five or six of them being etched by herself. The

others are reproduced by photo-process.

A number of women who have attained more or less literary celebrity have turned their hands to book-plate designing. Mrs. Agnes Castle, whose novels, in collaboration with her talented husband, have been on the high wave of popularity of late, has made several book-plates. Those designed for her husband are the best known. Mrs. Arthur Gaskin, who has written and illustrated a number of books for children, has made several book-plates in her pleasing style. On this side of the water, Mrs. Elizabeth Curtis Brenton, whose rendering of the Rubaiyat has brought her enduring fame, has done two excellent book-plates, one for herself and one for her husband.

The natural love of women for children shows itself in the subject we are considering. A large proportion of the designers in our list have done one or more plates for children. Miss Kate Greenaway is doubtless the best known illustrator who has made children's book-plates. Several of her designs have been reproduced in the various works on book-plates. Miss Fisher of Manchester and Miss Levetus of Birmingham have been particularly happy in book-plates for the nursery. Mention must also be made of

the designs by Miss Stratton, another English artist, who has made book-plates for two small boys and one for two small dogs. In one of these designs she uses the Mother Goose and Fairyland folk in most graceful style.

Miss Levetus has made more plates than any other woman designer that I have been able to find. At last accounts she had reached twenty-five. They are of high merit and many of them have been reproduced in book-plate volumes and periodicals.

A panel design by Miss Bonsall, of the Plastic Club of Philadelphia, is commemorative of the famous Arctic expedition of Dr. Kane, in which her father, Amos Bonsall, took part. The design shows their staunch vessel ice-bound in the north. Another design by a Plastic Club member is the one for the Club's library, and was chosen in competition. It is by Miss Hallowell, who has done several other designs of merit.

In this country, Mrs. Beulah Mitchell Clute stands at the head for number of designs and also, among a very few, near the top in quality. Mrs. Clute has made about twenty designs of most dainty conception and well-nigh perfectly drawn. Another Chicago designer, or rather group of designers, is known under the name of the Kalo Shop and is

composed of five young women who do a variety of artistic stuff. They have done several book-plate designs of which the stand of corn, for Mr. Harris, is a good example. Chicago seems to have her full share of women designers of book-plates. Miss Mary Reid and Miss Christia Reade have both done excellent work in the city by the lake. Miss Reid draws many of her motifs from the wild flowers and woods, and treats them in a highly decorative manner. One conventional design, based on the dandelion leaf, is especially good. Miss Reade goes to the same inexhaustible source for motifs, her favorite subject being the oak, whose leaves and acorns she has used in a pleasing manner in several plates.

The Pacific coast is represented by some interesting designs by Mrs. Wheelan of San Francisco.

In New York, Mrs. Annie Hooper, a well-known illustrator and decorative designer, has made a few book-plates that are a potent element in raising the general average of women's work in this field. A short time ago Mrs. Hooper was the prize winner in a book-plate competition instituted by the Buffalo Society of Artists. This design was for the Society's library and was reproduced in the New York *Tribune*—an unusual honor.

Miss Amy Sacker of Boston, whose book-cover designs all lovers of decoration know and admire, has also made a number of book-plates. The best known is the one for the Loring Reading Room. This shows a fine old ship full of action, and rich in decorative feeling. Miss Sacker's mediæval students, in their picturesque garments are always interesting. The plate for Mr. Swan pleasingly typifies the owner's profession.

"Widdecombe Fair" by Miss Pamela Colman Smith, published in colors some year or more ago, gave a new and delightful sensation to lovers of decorative illustration and introduced us to a new personality in the art world. Miss Smith has since done other work of a similar kind and a few book-plates. These latter are bits of thorough impressionism and are very delightful to those of us who like that kind, but must really be thorns to the realist.

Miss Totten is doing wonderfully telling work in the simple manner of the Japanese. Her sprays of flowers, almost in silhouette, and her butterflies and lanterns are most effective and refreshing, and a good foil to the prevailing involved designs.

The book-plate is enjoying a well-deserved popularity at present, though doubtless, in true American fashion, it will be overdone; never-

theless the range of design is so broad and the manner of treatment so varied, that we can stand a lot of it without tiring. It has been encouraging to find so large an interest in book-plate work among the women designers of this country. And while many have done plates in rather an experimental way, they all seem to appreciate the possibilities of the field and the returns in pleasure and profit to those who work it conscientiously. And so almost each month finds new hands and heads experimenting and the older ones gaining a surer balance and firmer touch.

CHECK LIST OF WOMEN DESIGNERS

A few words of explanation will be of assistance to those using the following list. The nationality of the designer is indicated by a letter preceding name, as A for Austria, B for Great Britain, C for Canada, F for France, G for Germany, S for United States, Sw for Sweden.

Contemporaries have no dates indicated. Designers of the past have dates appended.

Where the number of plates designed by an artist is known it is given in brackets, following name.

S Abbot, Mrs. Eleanore Plaisted
B Adams, Mrs. H. Isabel (3)
B Alday, ——
B Allen, Olive
B Amsden, Henriette
S Armstrong, Margaret
B Armytage, Cecilia (5)
S Atwood, Clara E. (5)
G Bagge, Bertha (5)
S Baillie, Mrs. Grace M.
B Balfour, Kathleen F.
B Bathurst, Countess Lilias
G Becker, Anna (2)
B Benthall, Mrs. Annie (6)
G Berkham, Emma
G Bernhard, Sophie (2)
B Berry, Agnes (2). 1793
G Biedermann, Mrs. C. von
B Birch, ——

G Bois-Raymond, Lucy du (7)
S Bonsall, Mary W. (3)
B Bonus, Isabel
B Bramley-Moore, Millicent (6)
S Brenton, Mrs. Elizabeth Curtis
B Brickdale, E. F. (2)
S Brown, Minna (2)
G Bulow, Mrs. Elizabeth von (6)
G Burger, Mrs. Lina
B Burgess, Ethel Kate
B Byfield, Mary
B Castle, Mrs. Agnes (8)
S Center, Mrs. Millie Hyde
S Chamberlain, Mary E.
S Cheney, Mary Moulton
G Clason, Luise
B Clennell, Beatrice E.
S Clute, Mrs. Bulah Mitchell (18)
B Cook, Mrs. Jane Elizabeth (5)
G Coudenhove, Countess von (2)
B Dearmer, Mrs. Mabel (3)
G Densinger, Mollie
B Dixon, Anna
B Dobbin, Ethel M.
C Donly, Mrs. Emma Brook
S Eddy, Mrs. Mary
S Eggleston, Allegra
G Elskamp, May
S Elwood, Margaret (6)
G Engel, Mrs. Amalie (11)
B Este, Margaret (6)
S Farnsworth, Ethel N. (2)
S Farr, Sophia Sword
B Fisher, May Chatteris (10)
B Florence, Mary Sargent
S Fuller, Grace

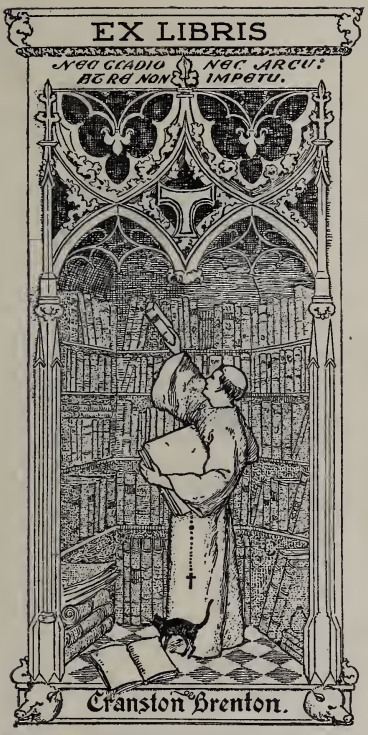
S Gage, Mabel C.
B Gaskin, Mrs. Georgia France (6)
S Gerow, Grace D.
B Glazier, Louise M.
G Gotz, Margarethe (3)
B Green, Edith Anne (16)
B Greenaway, Kate (6)
B Grosvernor, Lady Caroline (5)
B Grosvernor, Lady Dorothy H.
B Grosvernor, Mrs. Thomas
S Grover, Olive Lothrop (3)
S Hackley, Mary Frances (11)
B Hall, Helena
S Hollowell, Elisabeth Moore (5)
B Hallward, Mrs. Ella E. G. (2)
S Heisser, Margarethe E. (8)
B Helard, C. (15)
G Hirsch, Elli, (4)
B Holden, Violet M. (2)
S Hooper, Mrs. Annie B. (6)
B Hughes, Mrs. Swinnerton (5)
B Hunt, Muriel, (2)
S Hurlburt, ——
B Jackson, Enid M.
G Jacounchikoff, Marie
S Johnston, Camille D. E.
F Jourdan, Mrs., 1788
S Judson, Mrs. Stiles (2)
G Kannengiesser, Mrs. Anna H. (2)
S Kaucher, Harriett (8)
G Kessler, Anna
S Key, Mabel (2)
G Kichler, Auguste
G Knapp, Maranne
G Koerting, Hedwig
B Larcombe, Ethel

S Lawrence, Margaretta
S Lawrence, Mary Say
B Levetus, Celia (25)
G Lippert, Adele (6)
G Lister, Hamel (3)
S Little, Florence Estelle (13)
S Little, Mrs. Mary Dodds (2)
G Lodeman, Hilda (2)
S Lundborg, Florence
B Macdonald, Frances
B Macdonald, Margaret
S McDonald, Hope
B Mann, Catherine M.
S Mansfield, Mrs. Blanche McManus
S Marsh, Mrs. Arthur Richmond
B Martyn, Ethel K. (4)
G May, Anna (3)
B Mayo, Geraldine, Countess of (5)
S Mercer, Mrs. Florence Pettee
B Milne, Janie
S Morse, Kate
B Newcome, May (5)
S Nosworthy, Mrs. Florence England
G Ochs-Shlenker, Mrs. Kathinka (4)
B Orde, Margaret L. (6)
S Ostertag, Blanche
G O'Swald, Mrs. Toni (2)
G Otolia, Countess Kraszewska
S Page, Mrs. Georgia W. (4)
S Page, Adelaide Helen
S Pease, Bessie C. (4)
B Phelps, S. K.
B Pitman, Rosie M. M.
G Pommell-Deutz, Mrs. Th. von

F Pompadour, Madame, 1750
S Prindiville, Mary L. (15)
S Raymond, Ruth
S Reade, Christia M. (10)
G Reichlin-Meldegg, Irene Freün
B Reid, Marion (5)
S Reid, Mary M. (9)
G Reimers, Mrs. Engel
B Richardson, M.
B Roberts, Katherine M.
G Roderstein, Ottilie
S Rouillion, Mrs. Mary
B Rush, Olive
B Russell, Kate
S Sacker, Amy M. (5)
S Saltmarsh, Bertha E. (5)
B Sandheim, May
G Schonberger, Käthe (5)
G Schramm, Mrs. Olga (3)
A Schreder Marianne (7)
S Scribner, Sarah Marguerite (6)
Sw Sjöberg, Anne-Charlotte
B Skilton, Mary (2)
S Smith, Pamela Colman (6)
B Spokes, Mrs. Russell
B Stratton, Helen (3)
G Stüler-Walde, Marie (4)
S Totten, Emma J. (8)
G Varges, Helene (9)
G Versel, Annette (3)
F Vivier, Louise du, 1737
S Walker, Mrs. Williston
G Wahl, Anna von (7)
B Webb, Marie P.
B Welsberg, Countess von (2)
G Werner, Mrs. W. 18th Century

S Wesson, Grace Edwards
S Wheelan, Mrs. Albertine Randall (9)
S Whitehouse, Mrs. Margaret
B Whittaker, Gwladys
G Wille, Elli (5)
S Winterbotham, Ruth
B Woodward, Alice B. (4)
B Worsfold, Maud B.
S Wright, Grace Latimer (5)
G Wyon, Maria Elizabeth, 18th Century

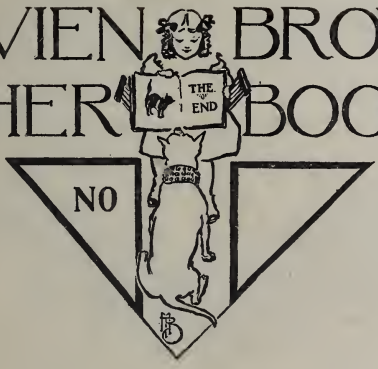
By Mary W. Bonsall



By Mrs. Elizabeth Curtis Brenton

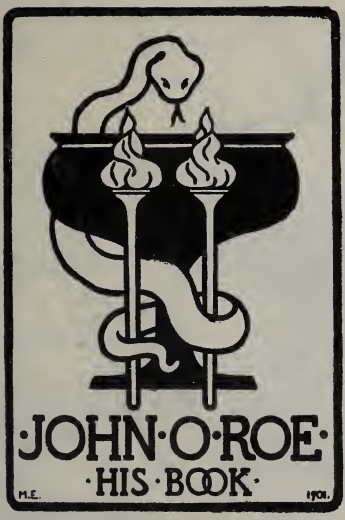
By Mrs. Lina Burger

VIVIEN BROWN
HER BOOK



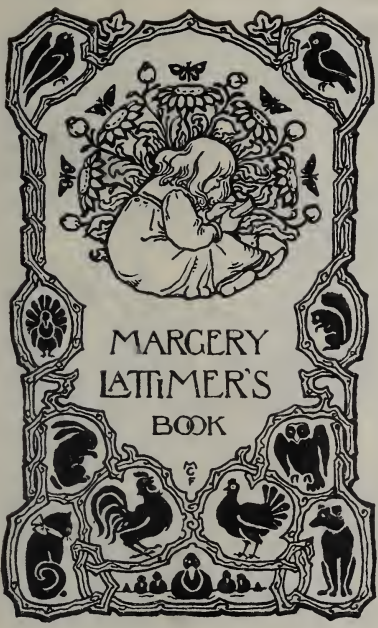
By Minna Brown

By Mrs. Beulah Mitchell Clute



By Margaret Elwood

By Ethel N. Farnsworth



By May Chatteris Fisher

By Mrs. Georgia France Gaskin

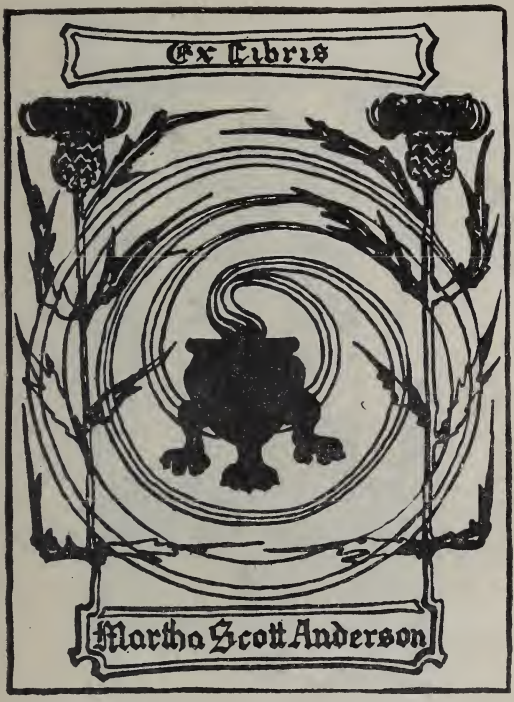
By Louise M. Glazier

By Mary F. Hackley

By Elisabeth M. Hallowell

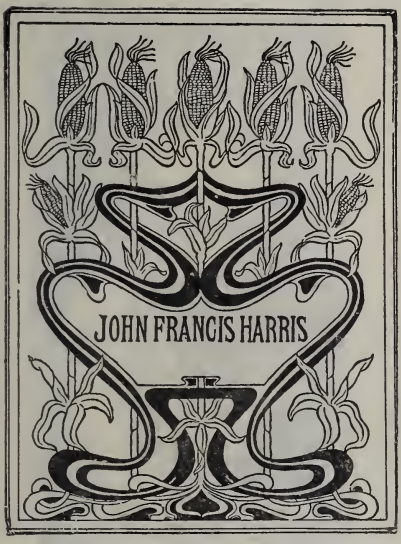
By Olive Lothrop Grover

By Margarethe Heisser



By Margarethe Heisser

By Mrs. Annie B Hooper



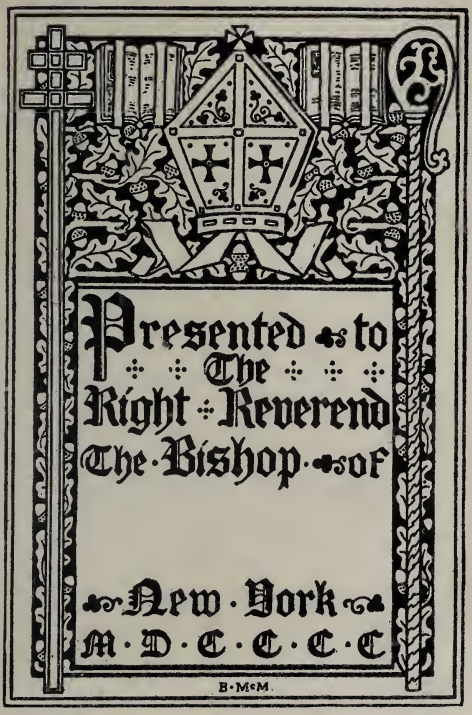
By the Kalo Shop

By Mabel Key

By Celia Levetus

By Mrs. Mary Dodds Little

By Florence Estelle Little



By Mrs. Blanche McManus Mansfield

a. Helen Page

HER BOOK
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